

Minutes: Ward 6 NPA Public Meeting, April 4, 2019
Greek Orthodox Church, 600 So. Willard St., Burlington, VT.

Steering Committee present: Charles Simpson, Matt Grady, Michelle Mraz, Gail Rafferty
Attendance: 17

Start: 7:02 pm

Public Comment Period: Charles announced that the All NPA will request \$2500 per NPA from the City's 2020 budget to facilitate NPA operations. Chris Trombly of NPA 4/7 will make this request on behalf of All NPA about April 5, 2019. NPA 6 has taken up this question in the past. We were asked if anyone objected to supporting this request and no one did tonight. Areas suggested for spending this money included communication equipment, space rent, public meals, speaker fees, and small grants to community groups.

The process of evaluating requests for Block Grant funding is in process. Mary Riley of NPA 6 is participating. Evaluations have gone to the Mayor and Council.

Michelle Mraz thanked Charles Simpson for his five years of service on NPA 6's steering committee and "his commitment to the democratic process", as did Phet Keomanyvanh, CEDO's liaison to the NPAs. Steering committee for NPA 6 presented Charles with a rose bush and gift certificate for Trattoria Delia restaurant.

Joel Fitzgerald was welcomed as a new member of the steering committee, starting in April.

Dept. of Public Works: Robert Goulding and Brian Davis of Chittenden County Regional Plan Association presented information on the on-going Winooski Ave. Corridor Study. This is a major north/south street essential for all modes of travel. Information on the several alternative designs for sidewalks, bikeways, motorized vehicle travel lanes and parking is available at www.tiny.cc/WinooskiAveStudy. Brian Davis can be contacted at bdavis@ccrpcvt.org or 861-0129 to discuss your comments. Eight plans are under consideration, each with differing impacts on bike lanes, vehicle travel, curbs, green strips, sidewalks, parking, and overall cost. Among the priorities is establishing two-way bike access. Impacts under consideration would reduce on-street parking between from 22 spaces up to 185 spaces along the route. Goulding and Davis will be visiting each NPA in April to make their presentation and hear comments. Both roundabouts and signals would work at all intersections but roundabouts wouldn't work with all options. Comments tonight included: Expressed concerns for parking north of Pearl St.; concern that cyclists don't follow the law and will enforcement be improved?; what is the impact of plans to remove off-street parking requirements on the parking situation?; why are grass strips 6 to 7 feet wide? Answer: there is a need for snow storage, trees, buffer functions. Additional comments were that bollards designating bike lanes were a hazard; expressed interest in protecting green areas; need for bike use data (A. available on-line); cycle rule enforcement works in Montreal; is a 5 foot side walk sufficient for pedestrians?

Data on construction projects taking place on our streets and sidewalks in the coming season is available on the City's Construction Portal,

<https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/construction>. Proceeds from the 2018 bond issue will accelerate repair of streets and sidewalks by about double previous rates. St. Paul St. will remain closed and water line repair on Maple St. will have a high impact on travel but won't completely shut down the street. Climate change has increased the frequency of the freeze/thaw cycle which has led to asphalt deterioration in excess of prior years. Waste water plan work is underway including the use of a \$1 million grant. St. Paul St. has its own website to allow tracking of progress:

<https://www.google.com/url?q=https://www.burlingtonvt.gov/dpw/GreatStreetsSP&sa=U&ved=0ahUKEwjpgNG7urnhAhWRY98KHRRSCCQQFggEMAA&client=internal-uds-cse&cx=016014972081156041943:j7cl8yb7avo&usq=AOvVaw3CCNUsDyUNnI2lkrXGNdEA>

The Gotcha e-scooter and e-bike project: "Micro mobility" adds choice and reduces the use of fossil fuels. No agreement has been signed yet. We are using a regional approach involving Winooski and So. Burlington. By state law, e-bikes are not allowed on sidewalks though conventional bikes are outside of the downtown area. There is a need to clarify City regulations on e-scooters. Bikes may be coming in mid-summer, scooters as a pilot in the fall. The Parks Commission reports that 80% of their public comments are in favor of allowing e-bikes on the Greenway (Bike Path). Comments: Any fee to the City should be per year, not per mile or per use, with at least some of the proceeds going to enforcement. How is liability for collisions structured? Will the City be held liable? Answer: The City won't have a contract with Gotcha. Further comments: As a pedestrian, I don't see much enforcement of the rules applied to bikes. We need to fund enforcement. Are there educational classes for bike riders?

Inclusionary Zoning: Todd Rawlings of CEDO and Erhard Mahnke outlined the process of up-dating IZ rules. IZ planning started in the 1980s and was passed in 1990 to create space for low and medium income people to live in the city. The trigger is five units. When new construction exceeds five, IZ comes into effect requiring from 15 to 25% of units be IZ depending on location and price. The rules included off-sets to allow developers to still make money and avoid the charge that IZ is a "taking". But these haven't worked well. They include relaxation in lot coverage limits, a density bonus, height relaxation, and a 50% on-site parking waiver. A working group has analyzed the existing IZ ordinance since 2017 and made recommendations which went to a joint committee of the Council and then on to the Planning Commission. There are 10 recommendations. They include a 100% on-site parking waiver for each 12 units of a project; a 100% waiver of impact fees (off-setting impacts on city services); and that off-sets be made "by right" rather than discretionary. The present payment in lieu of creating IZ units is \$190,000 per unit. This has never been used since 2008 when it was established. Recommendations are to reduce this to \$25,000 per unit for "small projects" under 17 units with the funds going to the Housing Trust Fund. Another recommendation is to lower the income ceiling for home ownership under IZ from 75% of AMI to 70%. There was no erosion of other important restrictions such as income targeting. Comments: I object to ending DRB review of waivers in respect to height limits and size. A. This is similar to the form based code system which adds flexibility by right within set appearance standards. Other comments can be sent to trawlings@burlingtonvt.gov.

School Committee Up-date: Clare Wool and Jeff Wick said that the board was hosting state-wide discussions establishing uniform standards for hiring school superintendents. Principals are being hired in a number of schools, including Champlain in the South District. Information and a chance to comment is on their website:

<https://www.bsdt.org/2019/03/10/principal-hiring-community-input-sessions-and-survey/>

BHS students won the state-wide Scholars' Bowl and will go on to a national competition. Three female Edmunds students won the top three places in the state-wide Hildene Lincoln Essay contest. We expect good news soon on outstanding contract negotiations. Our audit was positive and our budget is in the black. Q. Why is the new BHS principal being offered at two year interim contract rather than being made permanent? A. Of the four finalists, three dropped out so there was no competition even after we extended the time for the search. This is a state-wide issue in that there are now 35 vacancies for principal across Vermont. This will give the interim principal time to pull his team together. Q. I'm concerned that in a system about to build a new high school, that functions well, we can't attract the candidates we need. A. Human Resources and system leadership has to step up.

Adjourned: 9:10 pm

Respectfully submitted, Charles Simpson